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CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

Introduction

Crime And Punishment, by the Russian author Fyodor Dostoevsky, was published during 1866 in the literary journal and later published in a single volume.

The novel follows the mental anguish and moral dilemma of the protagonist Rodion Raskolnikov, a former law student in St. Petersburg who plans to kill a pawnbroker, an old woman who stores money and valuable things in her house.

Raskolnikov thinks that he would use her money to liberate himself from the poverty and seeks to convince himself that some crimes are justifiable if it's committed in order to remove some obstacles to the higher goal of men.

When the deed is done, he finds himself confused, paranoid and disgusted by himself and all his theoretical justification loses all their power as he struggles with guilt and is confronted with both internal and external consequences of his deeds.

Character buildup

➤ **Rodion Romanovich Raskolnikov**

He is the protagonist and the story focuses on his perspective. He is 23 yr old law student, now destitute; Raskolnikov is described in novel as "exceptionally Handsome taller in height, slim body with dark eyes and brown hair".

He is cold, apathetic and sometimes he is warm and compassionate. He commits a murder and the act of impulsive charity.

In the novel it also shows the internal struggle of Raskolnikov the torments of his own consciousness rather than the legal consequences of committing the murder.

He murders with the idea that he possesses enough intellectual and emotional fortitude to deal with the issues, but his sense of

guilt soon overwhelms him to the point of illness and psychological issues.

Raskolnikov's internal conflict intensifies as he interacts with others, especially Sonia Marmeladov, a poor but deeply spiritual woman forced into prostitution to support her family. Sonia becomes a moral compass for him. Through her suffering, humility, and devout Christian faith, Raskolnikov begins to confront the spiritual dimensions of his crime.

➤ **Sonia Marmeladova**

She is the daughter of Zakharovich Marmeladov whom Raskolnikov meets in a tavern at the beginning of the story. She is often characterized as self-sacrificial, shy, and innocent, despite being forced into prostitution to help her family.

Raskolnikov discerns in her the same feeling of shame and alienation that he experiences and then she becomes the first person to whom he confesses all his crimes to.

Sensing his sadness, she decides to support him even though she was the friend with Lizaveta who was the victim of Raskolnikov.

Through this whole story she is the moral strength and supporter for Raskolnikov throughout this novel.

Sonia Marmeladova's evolution is not one of shifting values, but of ever-deepening spiritual resilience. She begins as a symbol of suffering and ends as a symbol of help.

In a world filled with cruelty and despair, Sonia remains uncorrupted, showing that the power of love, humility, and faith can bring about profound transformation in others even if her own path is marked by silent suffering rather than outward glory, in the same way she helps and gives her all unconditional love to Raskolnikov despite his crimes.

➤ **Razumikhin**

He is Raskolnikov's loyal friend and a law student. The character is represented as a reconciliation of faith and reason.

He is upright, strong, intelligent and resourceful and naïve which helps Raskolnikov in his desperate situation.

He always admires Raskolnikov's intelligence and character and refuses to give any credits to other's suspicion and always supports him all the time.

Razumikhin falls in love with Dunya, and this love helps refine and solidify his character. His affection is not possessive or lustful, but respectful and protective. He admires her strength and dignity and genuinely wants to support and uplift her. Through Dunya, Razumikhin's raw goodness is tempered with responsibility, modesty, and emotional depth.

As the novel progresses, he begins to act with greater restraint and seriousness.

He stops drinking, starts planning for a more stable future, and expresses a desire to establish a business; a sign that he is evolving from an impulsive student to a reliable man with aspirations rooted in love, family, and morality.

➤ **Dunya**

She is the beautiful and headstrong sister of Raskolnikov who works as a governess. She plans to marry the wealthy lawyer Luzhin thinking it will enable her to ease her family desperate in financial situation and escape her former employer Svidrigailov. Her situation comes around cause of Raskolnikov decision to commit the murder.

A major stage in her evolution comes in her confrontation with Arkady Svidrigailov, the libertine who lusts after her and tries to manipulate her into submission. She agrees to meet him in secret to protect her family, knowing the danger he poses.

When Svidrigailov attempts to trap her, even threatening rape, Dunya draws a pistol and almost kills him. Her courage is undeniable. But more importantly, when she has the opportunity to shoot him and escape, she chooses not to, after he reveals his vulnerability.

In this moment, Dunya demonstrates moral control and emotional clarity. She does not let herself become either a victim or an executioner.

She exercises restraint not out of fear, but from a deeply internalized ethical compass. This moment crystallizes her

development; she is no longer simply defending herself or her family.

She is affirming her own humanity and moral agency.

➤ **Luzhin** (Pyotr Petrovich)

He is a well-off lawyer who is engaged to Dunya in the beginning of the story. His motives for the marriage are dubious.

Luzhin first appears as a prosperous, self-satisfied bureaucrat who plans to marry Dunya Raskolnikova. At first glance, he seems rational, pragmatic, and socially respectable. He claims to believe in order, morality, and philanthropy.

His ideology aligns with a cold utilitarianism because he sees women as his tools for his own personal enjoyment.

He slanders and falsely accuses Sonia of theft in an attempt to hurt Raskolnikov's relations with his family. Luzhin represents immorality in contrast with Svidrigailov's amorality and Raskolnikov's misguided morality.

Though we could see that he was neither tragic like Raskolnikov, nor redeemable like Sonia or Dunya but he is a cautionary figure, stripped of illusions and left to fade into insignificance.

➤ **Svidrigailov**

He is a wealthy former employer and former pursuer of Dunya.

As the novel progresses, Dostoevsky peels back layers of his character to reveal a man haunted by guilt, loneliness, and a yearning for something greater than pleasure.

He speaks to Raskolnikov not just as a fellow outsider, but as a philosophical counterpart who has walked further down the path of nihilism.

He is plagued by dreams and hallucinations, especially of the young girl he once abused and of his deceased wife. These visions suggest that his conscience, while long buried, is still alive.

Unlike Raskolnikov, who intellectualizes guilt, Svidrigailov experiences it, through subconscious torment.

Soon, we get to know that Svidrigailov's evolution is not about redemption or moral triumph, but about revelation and collapse.

He begins as a libertine predator, gradually reveals the stirrings of a lost conscience, and ends in existential despair. He is a man who sees the truth that love, morality, and connection matter, but is too spiritually dead to act on it.

In this sense, he serves as a dark warning by asking that what happens when intelligence and self-awareness exist without humility, belief, or moral conviction.

He is not evil in the traditional sense, but empty with a soul who has looked into the abyss and found nothing staring back.

➤ **Porfiry Petrovich**

The head of the investigation department in charge of solving the murders and confession of Raskolnikov. He does the procedure by psychological approach seeking to provoke and confuse Raskolnikov into a voluntary confession.

He seems deceptively mild and somewhat eccentric. He is not the intimidating detective figure common in crime novels; instead, he uses psychological strategy, irony, and patience. He gently needles Raskolnikov, creating an unsettling atmosphere of intellectual cat-and-mouse.

He understands Raskolnikov's theory of the "extraordinary man" and engages with it seriously. He debates Raskolnikov's ideas with intellectual respect, but also with quiet conviction that such a philosophy is dangerous and false.

Porfiry believes that no one can escape the psychological consequences of murder, not even someone who thinks himself above conventional morality.

➤ **Marfa**

Marfa Petrovna is the well-to-do country landowner who marries Svidrigaylov after bailing him out of debtors' jail.

When Svidrigaylov begins to get serious about their beautiful governess Dunya, Marfa Petrovna blames Dunya and ruins her reputation through vicious gossip.

Themes of the Story

The Nature of the Story

Fyodor Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* is not merely a psychological thriller or a murder mystery but it's also a profound philosophical and moral inquiry into the human soul, the nature of justice, and the dangerous seduction of utilitarian logic, raising the basic question,

“do certain extraordinary individuals have the right to commit crimes if their actions serve the greater good of humanity?”

The answer here takes turns as Dostoevsky's ideas slowly takes turn through the ideas of psychological and moral challenges which Raskolnikov faces.

As we go further, we get to know that his theme is most explicitly embodied in the protagonist, Rodion Romanovich Raskolnikov, a destitute former student who murders a pawnbroker.

He rationalizes his crime with the belief that some lives like that of the greedy, exploitative pawnbroker are worthless, and that eliminating such a person could be justified if it enables someone greater to rise and contribute positively to the world.

He compares or likens himself to historical figures such as Napoleon; men who, according to his theory, are permitted to misbehave moral boundaries for the sake of progress.

This ideological stance that extraordinary individuals may stand above conventional morality forms one of the story's central philosophical dilemmas. Raskolnikov's theory, however, does not stand untested.

Through a brilliantly structured narrative and psychological depth, Dostoevsky deconstructs this belief, exposing its flaws and revealing its moral and spiritual costs.

Redemption and the Power of Suffering

Fyodor Dostoevsky constructs a powerful narrative in which suffering is not merely a consequence of crime, but a pathway to redemption.

The novel presents a deeply spiritual vision of human existence, in which pain, guilt, and humility serve as necessary steps toward moral awakening and salvation.

Far from portraying suffering as meaningless, Dostoevsky inspires it with transformative power, showing how it purifies the soul, breaks down pride, and reconnects the individual with truth, compassion, and divine grace.

He believes he can transcend moral laws without having to bear the consequences, especially if his actions serve a greater good. He justifies the murder of the pawnbroker through this reasoning.

However, almost immediately after the act, he is plagued by guilt, anxiety, and inner torment, signs that suffering has begun to undermine the intellectual foundation of his beliefs.

He feels off and maybe he did something so wrong that he feels guilt but maybe his ego is that much that he feels repent about it.

As we continue the story, we get to see that in the character of Sonia Marmeladov serves as the novel's moral and spiritual anchor.

She endures deep suffering poverty, social shame, and the burden of supporting her family through prostitution. Yet, she faces her suffering not with bitterness, but with humility and quiet strength. Sonia's suffering is not destructive but redemptive, it brings her closer to God and deeper into compassion for others.

Sonia's faith, grounded in Christian ideals of love, sacrifice, and forgiveness, becomes the bridge to Raskolnikov's eventual redemption. When she reads him the story of Lazarus from the Bible, it is more than symbolic but is a direct invitation to spiritual rebirth. She represents the idea that only through love, self-denial, and acceptance of suffering can the human soul be renewed.

Raskolnikov resists the idea that his suffering has value. He views it as weakness or punishment, not purification. However, through his growing bond with Sonia and his encounters with other suffering characters such as Marmeladov and the deeply religious Porfiry, soon he gradually comes to see that true redemption lies not in escaping punishment, but in embracing it.

His final decision to confess and accept his sentence in Siberia marks the beginning of his transformation. At first, even in prison, he remains spiritually numb. But by the end, he experiences a profound inner change not because of the law, but because of his spiritual suffering and Sonia's persistent love.

In a moment of emotional breakthrough, he weeps and realizes he wants to live and love again. His suffering has done its work. It has stripped away his arrogance and opened the door to grace.

Dostoevsky suggests that redemption is only possible through human connection, humility, and suffering. Raskolnikov's transformation begins when he opens himself up to Sonya, a humble and self-sacrificing figure who accepts suffering out of love and faith.

Unlike Raskolnikov, she has no grand theory but just compassion.

Through Sonya and the Christian message that she carries, Raskolnikov starts to re-engage with his moral and spiritual self. In the epilogue, he confesses and is sentenced to Siberia.

Though still distant at first, his time in prison and Sonya's unwavering presence initiate a spiritual awakening.

His ultimate path to redemption lies not in ideology, but in accepting the moral law within himself, the value of every individual life, and the possibility of grace.

Fyodor Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* is a profound psychological and philosophical investigation into the human capacity for free will against the seemingly deterministic forces of poverty, ideology, and psychology.

Raskolnikov initially believes in the supremacy of rational will. He convinces himself that he is intellectually and morally capable of transcending conventional law which was, his infamous "extraordinary man" theory.

Expert :-

"I only wanted to have the daring....and I killed her. I wanted to find out then and quickly whether I was a louse like everybody else or a man."

Raskolnikov frames the murder not as a crime of desperation and madness, but also to test the freedom, a deliberate act of self-definition. He wants to prove his autonomy by asserting a moral exception.

This also reflects the idea of human beings are condemned to be free, responsible for defining themselves through their actions.

Raskolnikov slowly tries to attempt this, but Dostoevsky ultimately rejects the lines of autonomy and interrogates the limit of free will and especially when it's rooted in pride and ideology.

Dostoevsky loads the novel with force that shapes and restricts Raskolnikov's actions, suggesting a deterministic undercurrent.

Psychology of Guilt and Alienation

➤ The Guilt

Raskolnikov's guilt is not merely legal but existential and moral. After murdering Alyona Ivanovna and her sister Lizaveta, he becomes increasingly consumed by guilt not simply because he fears getting caught, but because the act clashes violently with his internal moral compass.

He initially believes in the *Superman* theory, that certain extraordinary individuals have the right to transgress moral boundaries for a greater good. He convinces himself that killing Alyona, would free others from her cruelty and allow him to do greater good with the stolen wealth.

However, this rationalization collapses after the murder.

"I killed the old pawnbroker woman and her sister Lizaveta with an axe and robbed them." (Part V, Chapter 4)

His confession to Sonya marks a pivotal moment where Raskolnikov begins to confront the depth of his guilt. His mental torment escalates through delirium, paranoia, and self-loathing, indicating how guilt manifests not just emotionally but somatically and psychologically.

Symptoms of Guilt

- ✓ **Paranoia:** Raskolnikov constantly fears discovery, yet his guilt is inward-facing more than it is about external judgment.
- ✓ **Illness:** He experiences feverish episodes that coincide with moments of intense psychological stress.
- ✓ **Hallucinations:** He imagines the pawnbroker laughing at him or returning from the dead, classical Freudian symptoms of repressed guilt.

His guilt alienates him from society but also from himself, creating a fragmented identity that he struggles to reconcile throughout the novel.

➤ Alienation

✓ Existential Isolation

From the outset, Raskolnikov is isolated emotionally, socially, and philosophically. He lives in a cramped, dark room symbolic of his mental confinement. He withdraws from friends and family, believing himself to be intellectually superior and morally unbound by societal norms.

"I did not bow down to you; I bowed down to all the suffering of humanity." (Part IV, Chapter 4)

This line, spoken to Sonya, encapsulates his contradictory desire: to transcend humanity while simultaneously feeling crushed by its suffering.

✓ Social Alienation

Raskolnikov is physically and emotionally distant from society. He avoids contact with others, lives in a tiny garret, and detests reliance on his mother or sister. This separation reflects his belief that he is not like ordinary people, but rather someone "extraordinary"—beyond conventional morality.

Yet his isolation becomes a prison, not a platform for greatness. His inability to connect, even with those who love him like Razumikhin or his mother—leaves him emotionally adrift and increasingly fragmented.

✓ Philosophical Alienation

Raskolnikov's theory, influenced by utilitarian and Nietzschean ideas of the "superman," alienates him from his own humanity. He tries to detach from empathy, compassion, and remorse in order to fit the mould of the "great man" who can kill for an idea. However, his **conscience resists dehumanization**.

The result is deep **existential confusion**: he no longer knows who he is. Is he a murderer?

A revolutionary?

A failed hero?

This loss of self is more terrifying to him than even the prospect of arrest.

Structure Of the Novel

The novel is meticulously divided into six parts and an epilogue, each contributing to the thematic and psychological arc of Raskolnikov. This segmented structure mirrors his psychological fragmentation and gradual journey toward self-awareness and redemption.

- ✓ **Part I-** Introduces Raskolnikov's theory and crime.
- ✓ **Parts II-IV-** trace his physical and psychological decline.
- ✓ **Part V-** It includes the ideological confrontation with other characters (especially Svidrigailov and Porfiry).
- ✓ **Part VI -** Brings about the internal climax and confession.
- ✓ **The Epilogue** - resents his punishment and tentative moral rebirth.

This structure allows Dostoevsky to alternate between intense inner monologue, dramatic interactions, and philosophical debate, reflecting the fractured and often contradictory state of Raskolnikov's psyche.

Despite its length, of over seven hundred pages, and philosophical depth, the events of *Crime and Punishment* unfold over a very short period, approximately three weeks. This tight time frame contributes to the novel's claustrophobic atmosphere. The compressed timeline enhances the sense of urgency and disorientation, making Raskolnikov's descent into guilt more palpable.

Running parallel to Raskolnikov's story are subplots involving characters like Sonia Marmeladova and Arkady Svidrigailov. These plots are not distractions but rather moral and philosophical counterpoints as:

- Sonia represents suffering, selflessness, and Christian redemption.
- Svidrigailov represents nihilism and hedonism, showing a different (and ultimately self-destructive) response to guilt and moral isolation.

These subplots reflect, challenge, and illuminate Raskolnikov's psychological journey, giving the structure both coherence and thematic depth.

By closely examining the internal conflicts of its protagonist, Raskolnikov, the novel *Crime and Punishment* explores themes of guilt and redemption. Using a third-person omniscient narrator, Dostoyevsky is able to delve deeply into Raskolnikov's troubled psychology, presenting Raskolnikov's thoughts, emotions, and reactions as he plans, executes, and then confesses to the murder of the pawnbroker and her sister. This examination of Raskolnikov emphasizes Dostoyevsky's idea that even the thought of harming others will subvert the human spirit, damaging the minds of perpetrators. Redemption, events suggest, is possible only through confession of guilt and an acceptance of personal responsibility for one's thoughts and actions alike.

Raskolnikov's internal conflict surfaces in the tension between his feelings of superiority over others and his sense of guilt over his own thinking and actions. At the beginning of the novel, he contemplates committing the heinous act as he walks around his squalid neighbourhood (extremely dirty and unpleasant, often because of lack of money), feeling physically disgusted at the notion of killing someone. He renounces the thought, yet it has recurs, and that thought alone is harmful. He heads to a dark and dingy bar and stumbles into an alcohol-induced stupor, signalling a figurative descent into depravity.

Raskolnikov, in the novel's inciting incident, reveals that his thoughts, his imagination alone, are enough to subvert the spirit: he decides that he will murder the pawnbroker. It is, he thinks, his destiny. He believes, as a matter of overcoming his own sense of inferiority, that he is a "superman," someone who transcends the laws and rules that govern others. He wants to murder Alyona Ivanovna because he considers her inferior, someone crude, shabby, and with "*eyes sparkling with malice.*"

At the novel's rising action begins, Raskolnikov's thinking leads to the murder. However, out of necessity he finds himself killing Alyona's sister Lizaveta as well. She is a simple woman who keeps her sister's home clean. Raskolnikov, despite his twisted reasoning, cannot justify her murder to himself. No matter how morally justified he once might have considered his actions, they have devastating collateral effects, harming acknowledged innocents.

As the rising action continues, Raskolnikov descends into mental and physical degradation; guilt over the murders increasingly occupies his thinking. Almost immediately, he starts to feel

paranoid, nervous, and restless, driven by a desire to get away with his crime. His mental and spiritual anguish is a conflict between his desire to confess and desire to escape, mark the start of his punishment. He has fainting spells whenever someone mentions the murders, and Porfiry Petrovich, a character with which Dostoevsky presents a psychological study of criminal behaviour, begins to suspect him of the killings.

As the novel progresses, events reveal Raskolnikov's increasing level of mental degradation. He becomes increasingly emotional, erratic, and reckless, as his compulsion to confess is at odds with his instinct for self-preservation. On multiple occasions, such as at the scene of the crime and at the Crystal Palace, he almost blurts out a confession, which further arouses Porfiry's suspicions.

At the novel's climax, Raskolnikov can no longer avoid the compulsion to find redemption, a fact foreshadowed through Dostoevsky's use of the allegory of Lazarus, which signals a desire to return to life. He starts caring for others, wants to save his mother and sister from the pain of knowing what he has done, and finally confesses to Sonya. Like Lazarus's return to the living, Raskolnikov starts slowly recovering his mental composure, resolving his inner conflict by recognizing himself to be human, not "superhuman." He begins a return from self-imposed isolation from human society, forming a meaningful relationship with Sonya.

In the novel's falling action, Raskolnikov continues on his redemptive journey by confessing to the police. He falters and even turns back once from the police station, but he sees Sonya and decides to follow through. Sonya's righteous, selfless, and morally sound character serves as a foil to Raskolnikov, and it is through her that his redemption becomes complete. After his confession, Raskolnikov is tried and sent to a prison in Siberia.

The novel's resolution finds Raskolnikov discovering love for Sonya while in prison. Ironically, it is in the forced isolation of his punishment that he forges a meaningful human connection for the first time in his life. Though Raskolnikov remains conceited and thinks of his actions more as mistakes than morally repugnant behaviours, Dostoevsky ends the story on a positive note, suggesting that the protagonist is on his way to a final redemption through his love for Sonya.

THEMES

The novel builds on multiple underlying themes.

Alienation from Society

Alienation is the primary theme of *Crime and Punishment*. At first, Raskolnikov's pride separates him from society. He sees himself as superior to all other people and so cannot relate to anyone. Within his personal philosophy, he sees other people as tools and uses them for his own ends. After committing the murders, his isolation grows because of his intense guilt and the half-delirium into which his guilt throws him.

Over and over again, Raskolnikov pushes away the people who are trying to help him, including Sonya, Dunya, Pulcheria Alexandrovna, Razumikhin, and even Porfiry Petrovich, and then suffers the consequences. In the end, he finds the total alienation that he has brought upon himself intolerable.

Only in the Epilogue, when he finally realizes that he loves Sonya, does Raskolnikov break through the wall of pride and self-centeredness that has separated him from society.

The Psychology of Crime and Punishment

The manner in which the novel addresses crime and punishment is not exactly what one would expect. The crime is committed in Part I and the punishment comes hundreds of pages later, in the Epilogue. The real focus of the novel is not on those two endpoints but on what lies inbetween them, an in-depth exploration of the psychology of a criminal. The inner world of Raskolnikov, with all of its doubts, deliria, second-guessing, fear, and despair, is the heart of the story. Dostoevsky concerns himself not with the actual repercussions of the murder but with the way the murder forces Raskolnikov to deal with tormenting guilt.

Indeed, by focusing so little on Raskolnikov's imprisonment, Dostoevsky seems to suggest that actual punishment is much less terrible than the stress and anxiety of trying to avoid punishment. Porfiry Petrovich emphasizes the psychological angle of the novel, as he shrewdly realizes that Raskolnikov is the killer and makes several speeches in which he details the workings of Raskolnikov's mind after the killing. Because he understands that a guilt-ridden criminal must necessarily experience mental torture, he is certain that Raskolnikov will eventually confess or go mad. The expert mind

games that he plays with Raskolnikov strengthen the sense that the novel's outcome is inevitable because of the nature of the human psyche.

The Idea of the Superman

At the beginning of the novel, Raskolnikov sees himself as a "superman," a person who is extraordinary and thus above the moral rules that govern the rest of humanity. His vaunted estimation of himself compels him to separate himself from society. His murder of the pawnbroker is, in part, a consequence of his belief that he is above the law and an attempt to establish the truth of his superiority.

Raskolnikov's inability to quell his subsequent feelings of guilt, however, proves to him that he is not a "superman." Although he realizes his failure to live up to what he has envisioned for himself, he is nevertheless unwilling to accept the total deconstruction of this identity. He continues to resist the idea that he is as mediocre as the rest of humanity by maintaining to himself that the murder was justified. It is only in his final surrender to his love for Sonya, and his realization of the joys in such surrender, that he can finally escape his conception of himself as a superman and the terrible isolation such a belief brought upon him.

Nihilism

Nihilism was a philosophical position developed in Russia in the 1850s and 1860s, known for "**negating more**," in the words of Lebezyatnikov. It rejected family and societal bonds and emotional and aesthetic concerns in favour of a strict materialism, or the idea that there is no "mind" or "soul" outside of the physical world.

Linked to nihilism is utilitarianism, or the idea that moral decisions should be based on the rule of the greatest happiness for the largest number of people. Raskolnikov originally justifies the murder of Alyona on utilitarian grounds, claiming that a "louse" has been removed from society. Whether or not the murder is actually a utilitarian act, Raskolnikov is certainly a nihilist; completely unsentimental for most of the novel, he cares nothing about the emotions of others. Similarly, he utterly disregards social conventions that run counter to the austere interactions that he desires with the world. However, at the end of the novel, as Raskolnikov discovers love, he throws off his nihilism. Through this action, the novel condemns nihilism as empty.

IS RASKOLNIKOV A HERO?

That's the question one is left with after we finish reading the epilogue.

If a hero is defined as a man or woman with noble attributes who carries out difficult and frightening tasks, then at first glance Raskolnikov seems the opposite of a hero. He murders a defenceless old woman, then insists he has done nothing wrong. Still, his conscience torments him: He worries about his actions, his family, and the nation in which he lives. Because he thinks deeply about moral problems, Raskolnikov is ultimately able to commit brave acts, turning himself into the police and atoning for his sinful past. Though Raskolnikov spends most of the novel in a decidedly non-heroic state, his keen, searching conscience allows him to attain grace in the closing epilogue and he ends the novel a hero.

To be sure, Raskolnikov engages in numerous unheroic thoughts and deeds. Toward the beginning of the novel, he attacks and kills the moneylender Alyona Ivanovna. He tells himself he has behaved admirably; by his perverse logic, moneylenders are so cruel that they do not deserve to live.

"Crime?"

he says.

"What crime?"

He likens Alyona Ivanovna to a "louse" that has "***sucked the life-sap from the poor,***" and claims that killing her was a virtuous act that should earn him forgiveness for forty sins. Raskolnikov also develops a worldview in which some men are so farsighted and brilliant that they may kill anyone who displeases them, counting himself as one of these men. This pattern of selfish thoughts and actions certainly does not seem heroic.

On the other hand, Raskolnikov's active conscience distinguishes him from most people. The guilt he feels after killing Alyona Ivanovna is the most brutal punishment in the novel. Even the police investigator, Porfiry Petrovich, admires Raskolnikov for his finely-tuned sensibilities. His conscience causes him to worry not just about his own sins, but also about the sins of nineteenth-century Russia.

He refuses to marry, seeing the institution as deeply flawed and imbalanced, and he forbids his sister to marry Luzhin because such a marriage would reduce her to a servant. The status of Russian women enrages him and his heart aches for Sonya, who prostitutes herself to feed her family. Tormented, he dreams of a poor, weak horse that gets crushed in the street. To Raskolnikov, the horse represents Russia's starving masses, sacrificed in the name of progress. These moments of bitterness and idealism show that Raskolnikov has an extraordinary conscience. The symbolism used by Dostoyevsky is dark and cruel, quite in line with the wider Russian literature.

Raskolnikov's active, well-developed conscience ultimately enables him to commit heroic acts. These acts of heroism occur toward the very end of the novel, after the psychological torment proves too much to bear and he turns himself in. Sentenced to hard labour in Siberia, the young man accepts his fate with surprising courage and grace.

Though it doesn't happen immediately, Raskolnikov eventually renounces his selfish thoughts and realizes that he had allowed himself to become alienated from the human community. The resolute loner even declares his love for the steadfast Sonya, an act of pure faith from a man who has despised marriage for so long.

"Instead of dialectics,"

Dostoyevsky writes, Raskolnikov realizes that ***"there was life, and something different to work itself out in his consciousness."*** He changes from a self-pitying criminal into a generous, compassionate man, capable of loving another person.



QUOTES

There are numerous quotes that have been repeated frequently, as is the tradition with Russian literature.

- ✓ **"I don't believe in a future life,"**

... Raskolnikov.

Svidrigailov tells Raskolnikov that he has been seeing his dead wife's ghost, and reflects that ghosts represent "**shreds and fragments of other worlds.**" Raskolnikov replies that he doesn't believe in an afterlife, Svidrigailov's "**other worlds.**" Raskolnikov's belief that no life exists outside of the body and his rejection of the idea of a soul represent a nihilistic viewpoint. Nihilism favors a strict materialism, a belief that reality exists only within the bounds of the material world.

- ✓ **"What do you think, would not one tiny crime be wiped out by thousands of good deeds?"**

... a random student

Raskolnikov overhears a conversation between a student and an officer in which the student makes case for justifying the theft and homicide of Alyona, the pawnbroker. The student argues that the immorality of murdering an old woman near death who actively harms people seems far outweighed by the benefit in the countless lives her money would improve. His argument applies an ethic of utilitarianism to determine right conduct by usefulness thereby making moral decisions outside of religious value system links utilitarianism with nihilism and both with socialism.

- ✓ **"Don't torture me!" he said with a gesture of irritation.**

This type of short and rude response comes from Raskolnikov often.

He treats people, even family members, as an annoyance. After he commits murder and conceals the crime, Raskolnikov's mental state rapidly deteriorates, a condition that distresses both his sister and mother.

The two women try to help and comfort him, but he orders them out. Raskolnikov says he loves his family, and he does, but he also isolates himself emotionally, out of feeling superior. Raskolnikov's unsentimental behaviour and lack of concern for others' feelings make him a good example of a nihilist.

Addendum

SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS-

Chapter 1

Summary

A young, impoverished former student, Rodion Romanovich Raskolnikov, leaves his very small apartment in St. Petersburg, Russia, and walks outside. It is July and very hot. He does not wish to see his landlord, to whom he owes months of unpaid rent, but he no longer fears her, he simply does not wish to be bothered by her questions. He has stopped caring for his appearances and goes around in rags, often talking to himself on the street. He acknowledges aloud that he has a "fantasy" he is contemplating putting into action.

Analysis

Raskolnikov's poverty and psychological situation are introduced. He has so little money he can barely afford to eat; certainly he can no longer afford his university tuition. It is not clear whether his tendency toward privacy, obsession, and anxiety predated his money troubles or developed as a result of them, both seem to get worse as time goes on.

Summary

Near the Haymarket, a poor neighbourhood and gathering-place for prostitutes, a drunken man yells at Raskolnikov about his hat, which is so broken and dented as to be noticeable. Raskolnikov remarks to himself that small details like the hat could cause his whole "plan" to fail. Raskolnikov knows exactly how many steps (730) it takes to get to a particular house, the destination for the day's "trial."

Analysis

The first mention of "the plan," which will result in the murder of the pawnbroker and her innocent sister Lizaveta. A peculiarity of Raskolnikov's psychological state is revealed here: he is so obsessive as to know how many steps he must take to reach his

destination, yet he forgets obvious things, like the hat which could cause him to be noticed during the crime.

Summary

Raskolnikov enters the apartment house, where many lower-middle class people live, and walks to the fourth floor; there, a German official is moving out, meaning the old woman, whom Raskolnikov is going to see, will be soon be the sole tenant on her floor. Raskolnikov rings and is questioned by the old woman, who opens the door slightly but, seeing others moving out of the German's apartment, is reassured of her safety. She lets him inside. Raskolnikov introduces himself and the old woman replies that she remembers his visit the previous month.

Analysis

The pawnbroker appears to be wary of all her customers, and she seems also to recognize the difficulty of Raskolnikov's situation. What is less clear is the pawnbroker's own personality. She is called a "louse" by many of her customers, for she pays very little for pawned items, but she appears simply to be an old, frail woman concerned with her own safety in her apartment.

Summary

They walk further into the apartment, and Raskolnikov observes the spare, clean furnishings, which he believes are maintained by a woman named Lizaveta. Raskolnikov announces he has something to pawn with the old woman, whose name is Alyona Ivanovna; she is a pawnbroker, thus explaining Raskolnikov's previous visit, when he pawned a ring for two roubles.

Analysis

The rings were given to Raskolnikov by his sister Dunya; the watch was his father's. These objects are indicators of his family and their love for Raskolnikov, in fact, throughout the novel, Dunya, his mother Pulcheria, and his friend Razumikhin appear willing to go to great lengths to help Raskolnikov, even when he does not seek assistance.

Summary

Now he offers his father's watch, which Alyona believes is worth a rouble and a half, minus interest accrued on the ring. Raskolnikov is angered but accepts her low offer. Before he leaves, Raskolnikov says he will have something else to pawn soon: a cigarette case. He also asks whether Lizaveta, Alyona's sister, lives with her and is around often; Alyona brushes the question off distrustfully.

Analysis

Raskolnikov grows nervous and enquires rather awkwardly about Lizaveta. Although he feels he has planned out the crime painstakingly, it becomes apparent, both here and later, that he becomes nervous at the thought of killing; he cannot be as ruthless as he desires to be.

Summary

Overcome by anguish and horror at his plans, Raskolnikov leaves the apartment. He decides to enter a tavern, which he never does, and drink to ease his hunger. He gulps down a beer and feels much better. Looking around the tavern, he spots two drinkers and one other man, a retired official, sitting quietly and separately.

Analysis

Although Raskolnikov mutters to himself, walks around Petersburg aimlessly, and sleeps in public on occasion, he barely drinks. His troubles with madness derive from other causes, not from a dependence on alcohol.

Chapter 2

Summary

Raskolnikov finds that he now wishes to be in the company of others. For the past month, he has spurned all company. He glances at the retired official, who appears ready to talk to him. The man has a face "swollen from drink" and is ill-shaved and dirty. He begins speaking to Raskolnikov, introducing himself as Marmeladov, a low-ranking civil servant. Raskolnikov begins explaining that he is a

student, only to break off and experience “**an irritable feeling of loathing.**”

Analysis

Raskolnikov grows angry at the mention of his university studies, which have been interrupted by his extreme poverty. It is revealed later in the novel that Raskolnikov had very few friends at University, only Razumikhin, who also studied in impoverished circumstances took the trouble to befriend Raskolnikov, despite his prickliness.

Summary

Marmeladov speaks eagerly. He says that poverty is not a vice, but total poverty, destitution, is indeed one. He also admits to having slept on the banks of the Neva the past five nights. The tavern's owner and a worker laugh at Marmeladov, egging him on with questions about his life. Marmeladov begins a long, confused discussion of his problems: his wife, Katerina Ivanovna, was recently beaten by a man named Lebezyatnikov, whom Marmeladov had asked, in vain, for a loan. Marmeladov tells Raskolnikov that Katerina is of higher birth, the daughter of an officer, and describes himself as but a “**brute.**” Katerina is suffering from consumption (tuberculosis), but Marmeladov has spent all the family's money on drink.

Analysis

Marmeladov is, in many ways, a foil for Raskolnikov. Although the cause of his madness is drink, not isolation and poverty, he feels that nothing in his life can go right, and that it is his fate to suffer. Marmeladov here introduces Katerina, his wife, who will be left alone to support the family after Marmeladov's death, and who will succumb to madness herself. In one of the novel's many coincidences, Lebezyatnikov will reappear as the roommate of Luzhin, Dunya's fiancé.

Summary

Marmeladov explains his problems more specifically, feeling that Raskolnikov is a “sorrowful” man and therefore might understand. Katerina was educated in a school for nobles and

received a “**certificate of merit**” for her studies. This inherent nobility, according to Marmeladov, explains why she would not tolerate Lebezyatnikov’s “**rudeness**,” which Marmeladov does not describe further. Her recent comments to Lebezyatnikov caused him to beat her. Marmeladov goes on: he met Katerina when she was widowed with three children; her first husband, an officer, had gambling debts and died during a court proceeding. Marmeladov was also a widower with a fourteen-year-old daughter. He married Katerina and swore off drinking for one year.

Analysis

Katerina makes reference throughout the novel to her high birth. Wealth in the novel is not always measured in cash—just as frequently it is gauged by the circumstances of one’s social life, or the necessity for one to work. Katerina relies upon her father’s nobility, and the comfortable circumstances under which she was raised, in order to maintain her sanity before and after Marmeladov’s death. Even in moments of deepest despair, Katerina does not abandon her insistence that she is of noble birth and “**too good**” for poverty.

Summary

But Marmeladov later lost his job and began drinking again. Over the next year and a half he found work intermittently and continued drinking, only to arrive in Petersburg, find a job, and lose it once more. He, Katerina, and the three young children live at Fyodorovna Lippewechsel’s house. Marmeladov then speaks of his daughter from his first marriage, Sonya, whom he tried to educate in her youth, before the family ran out of money.

Analysis

Marmeladov seems constitutionally incapable of sobriety. His alcoholism is the cause of his family’s poverty, and it forces Sonya to abandon her own studies—much as Raskolnikov is later forced to abandon his. Sonya is forced to work in order to support the family while Katerina cares for the younger children.

Summary

Earlier Katerina complained that Sonya, old enough to work, was not contributing to the family's welfare. Marmeladov tells of one night, when Sonya finally went out to work and returned after eight, presumably having prostituted herself for thirty roubles, which she gave to Katerina. Katerina accepted the money and kissed Sonya's feet as Sonya wept in bed.

Analysis

Sonya's prostitution is necessary to provide for Marmeladov's family. It becomes a source of consternation for Marmeladov and, later, for Raskolnikov, who believes his sister's desire to marry Luzhin for money to also be a form of prostitution, only one that is more socially acceptable.

Summary

Sonya is forced to carry a "**yellow pass**," indicating she is a prostitute. Marmeladov then reveals the source of the quarrel between Katerina and Lebezyatnikov. At first, Lebezyatnikov attempted to solicit Sonya, but he thought better of it and reported that it would not be honourable to live in the same apartment-house as a prostitute. Katerina took issue with this comment and spoke to Lebezyatnikov, who beat her. Sonya was therefore kicked out of the building; she now lives with a tailor Kapernaumov and his family, who are all "**tongue-tied**," - sufferers of speech impediments.

Analysis

Lebezyatnikov is later revealed to be a proponent of the "new" liberal beliefs, which include a strong desire for feminine equality in public and private affairs. His desire to solicit Sonya underscores the hypocrisy of his outlook: he believes in women's equality but nevertheless believes it is acceptable to solicit a prostitute and beat a woman who opposes him.

Summary

Marmeladov went to his supervisor after Sonya's dismissal and begged for one more chance at his job, which he was granted. Marmeladov's new job changed the family dynamic entirely. Katerina, who formerly only loathed her husband, began cooking him more elaborate meals and mending his clothes. Sonya

even visited him, but at night only, so as not to arouse suspicion. Katerina even became friendly again with the landlady, Amalia Fyodorovna, and told her, falsely, of Marmeladov's important position at the office. Six days previous to his conversation with Raskolnikov, Marmeladov brought home his first salary, and his family situation seemed secure.

Analysis

Marmeladov's apparent change of fortune seems especially cruel considering his death later in the novel. Raskolnikov, too, experiences several moments when he appears to be "in the clear", unsuspected of the murder, and positioned to begin life anew. Marmeladov and Raskolnikov cannot escape their fates because they have given themselves over to immorality: Marmeladov to drunkenness, Raskolnikov to murder.

Summary

But Marmeladov's alcoholism proved too much. He stole his salary from Katerina's trunk and, for the past five days has been inebriated and sleeping outside. He even asked Sonya for a little extra money for a final bottle, which she gave him. Marmeladov drinks the last of that bottle before Raskolnikov and goes on a long rant, claiming that, though he does not deserve pity, he will nonetheless be forgiven by God, as will Sonya; he will be welcomed into heaven along with other sinners and fools.

Analysis

Another scene of coincidence, as Raskolnikov will later steal goods from the pawnbroker's trunk after murdering her. Marmeladov believes that God will forgive all sins: this, too, is repeated to Raskolnikov later on, by Dunya and by Sonya, both of whom encourage him to repent for his crimes and beg forgiveness of God.

Summary

After Marmeladov's speech, Raskolnikov agrees to accompany him home. Marmeladov's family lives in a subdivided corner of Amalia Lippewechsel's fourth-floor apartment, and their living-space is cramped and filled with garbage and rags. Katerina, who is rather young but haggard and sickly in appearance, notices Raskolnikov and Marmeladov in the doorway and begins screaming at her husband, asking if he really took all the money, and dragging him by

the hair into the main room. Marmeladov, being dragged, claims that his punishment "***is a delight to him.***"

Analysis

Marmeladov claims to love his punishment, in some sense accepting suffering makes him feel that he is repenting for his crime. This is another instance of foreshadowing: although Raskolnikov is unrepentant even when he is sent to Siberia after his confession that he begins, under Sonya's supervision and the influence of her love, to understand that his period of incarceration will lead to a better life. Unfortunately, Marmeladov does not live long enough to experience such a transformation for himself.

Summary

Frau Lippewechsel arrives, announcing the family must leave the apartment immediately. Raskolnikov leaves unnoticed and places a handful of money from his own pocket on a windowsill. On his way out he regrets giving this money away but realizes he cannot take it back. He also comments to himself that man will become accustomed to even the lowliest of circumstances.

Analysis

This is one of many times in the novel that Katerina's landlady demands the family clear out of the apartment. Raskolnikov gives away money to many characters throughout the book, showing that he does not value it despite needing it desperately, and therefore that he is not motivated to murder for reasons of money.)

Chapter 3

Summary

Raskolnikov awakes unhappy the next morning in his cramped, dusty, sparsely furnished apartment. The building's maid Nastasya arrives and orders Raskolnikov to rise from bed, since it's past nine o'clock. He gives her some small change for food, drinks her stale tea, and is convinced to eat a small portion of cabbage soup. Nastasya informs Raskolnikov that his landlady, Praskovya Pavlovna, is initiating a police complaint against him for payment of back-rent.

Nastasya chastises Raskolnikov for his laziness; he no longer teaches children and claims his only work is “**thinking.**” Before leaving, Nastasya gives Raskolnikov a letter from his mother, sent from the provinces.

Analysis

Nastasya serves as a substitute mother figure for Raskolnikov while his family is away in the provinces. In this section Raskolnikov’s apartment is described in more detail, and it barely seems habitable, he can open the door only when he is lying down on his sofa, and his books and other items are covered in dust. It is as though Raskolnikov has not moved for weeks on end. It is hard to imagine that Raskolnikov ever worked at all, although it becomes clear that he served as a tutor for younger students before his recent spate of anxiety.

Summary

Raskolnikov reads the letter, from his mother Pulcheria, has not written for two months, but can now tell Raskolnikov of recent good fortune in their family. Dunya, Raskolnikov’s sister, has been working as a servant in the house of the Svidrigailovs, a relatively wealthy family in the same province. Dunya took out a salary advance of hundred roubles when she began work in order to send sixty to Raskolnikov the previous year, and his mother had also sent smaller portions of her own pension, inherited from Raskolnikov’s father after his death.

Analysis

Raskolnikov’s mother worries about her son most of all, although she loves Dunya dearly, Raskolnikov is the first born and her only son, and according to Russian custom at the time, Raskolnikov is the head of the family despite his inability to provide monetarily for his mother and sister. Indeed, Raskolnikov is financially supported by these two women throughout the novel)

Summary

Dunya’s position was placed in jeopardy when Mr. Svidrigailov began making passes at her, eventually asking her to elope with him. Dunya refused but, hoping not to lose her job,

stayed in her position for six weeks, during which time Marfa Svidrigailov overheard her husband begging Dunya once again to run away with him. Marfa mistook Dunya for the initiator of affections and dismissed her immediately, much to Raskolnikov family's shame.

Analysis

Although Dunya refuses all of Svidrigailov's advances, Marfa believes she is guilty of seducing her husband and speaks out against Dunya throughout the neighbourhood. This has serious financial consequences for the family, since Dunya's income, combined with Raskolnikov's father's pension, must support the three of them.

Summary

Pulcheria and Dunya were afraid to inform Raskolnikov of this news, not wanting to burden him, and did not write during the intervening two months. Marfa slandered Dunya throughout the province, further shaming the family. But Svidrigailov ultimately could not stand the lies being told, however unknowingly, by his wife; he confessed to her and proved his guilt by providing a letter of Dunya's in which she refused Svidrigailov and chastised him for his immorality.

Analysis

Svidrigailov will reappear later in the text, in Petersburg. Indeed, most of the characters in the novel referenced in the provinces Luzhin, Lebezyatnikov, Svidrigailov—make their way to Petersburg and figure into Raskolnikov's drama. Svidrigailov will later argue that he truly loved Dunya, and that his desire to elope with her was genuine, and his actions here do attest to some level of honesty and goodness in him.

Summary

Now Marfa experienced a great shame and went to the houses of the province revoking her previous statements and insisting on Dunya's total innocence. Dunya's reputation was restored, and in short order a relative of Marfa's named Pyotr Petrovich Luzhin proposed marriage to her. Dunya and Pulcheria have agreed

in principle to this marriage, arranged speedily, without Raskolnikov's consent; as Pulcheria goes on to explain.

Analysis

Luzhin appears to be a "***deus ex machina***," or "***God from the machine***", a character that arrives to eliminate another character's troubles entirely. But from the beginning Luzhin's advances have an air of mystery about them. For one thing, it is not initially clear why he wishes for the wedding to take place so quickly.

Summary

Luzhin met with Dunya once, in a formal setting, before proposing. He is 45 years old, a rising government official, and "***still handsome***," in Pulcheria's words. He is also in accord with the political fashions of the time, meaning he is politically liberal and describes himself as an "***enemy of all prejudice***." Pulcheria admits that Dunya does not feel a "***special love***" for Luzhin, but her inherent goodness and his solid circumstances should make for a strong match.

Analysis

Dostoevsky makes Luzhin an object of ridicule. Luzhin seems to understand that the "***new liberal ideas***," including those of feminine equality and political democratization, are gaining currency in Russia. But Luzhin does not seem to understand why these ideas ought to be championed; he merely repeats what he reads in popular publications in order to get ahead in his governmental career.

Summary

In the letter, Pulcheria describes how, at his second visit with the family, Luzhin announces that it is ideal for a husband to marry an impoverished woman who has "***experienced some hardship***," since then she will see her husband as her protector.

This comment dismays Pulcheria, but Dunya distinguishes between Luzhin's words and his possible behaviour as a future husband. She decides to accept Luzhin's marriage proposal. Meanwhile Luzhin is enroute to Petersburg, where he must attend a matter in the

Senate. Both Pulcheria and Dunya hope that Luzhin will take on Raskolnikov as a secretary, with a secret wish that he become partner one day. Luzhin says that he does need a secretary, and having a family member in the position would be convenient.

Analysis

An important part of Pulcheria's letter. Luzhin mentions that a woman who has no money is therefore required to depend upon her husband for her livelihood. This makes a more devoted wife, in Luzhin's view. Raskolnikov takes umbrage at this comment and worries that Luzhin wishes simply to dominate Dunya. Pulcheria fears the same, but Dunya argues, at least initially, that she can handle her husband-to-be and that she is not making a sacrifice for anyone—she is instead getting married to Luzhin because she feels she can grow to love him.

Summary

Luzhin wishes to meet Raskolnikov in Petersburg; Dunya has already spoken highly of her brother to her fiancé, but he resolves that he will judge Raskolnikov's character in person. Pulcheria reveals that Luzhin will send for her and for Dunya within a week, bringing them to Petersburg. Luzhin will pay for (only) some of their travel's costs, but news of the marriage will enable Pulcheria to receive an advance on her pension from her creditor, meaning she can send Raskolnikov twenty five or thirty roubles very soon.

Analysis

Luzhin's lack of generosity also arouses Raskolnikov's (and, later, Razumikhin's) suspicion. Luzhin appears to want to be married in order to further his career, just as he repeats ideas about liberalism in order to better position himself for future promotion. Raskolnikov does not trust that Luzhin's intentions with Dunya are noble or gentlemanly. Certainly, he does not think they are marrying for love.

Summary

Dunya has joked to Pulcheria that she is so excited to see Raskolnikov; she could marry Luzhin almost for that reason alone. Pulcheria closes her letter with an outpouring of love and great happiness at the family's reunion after three years'

separation. Raskolnikov is greatly agitated by the letter and must leave his apartment when he finishes reading.

Analysis

It is revealed that Raskolnikov has not seen his sister and mother for three years. Their communication via letter has also been infrequent. Raskolnikov's relationship with them will become more intimate in Petersburg, but only for a time; eventually Raskolnikov will swear off any further meetings with his family.

Chapter 4

Summary

Outside, Raskolnikov walks and talks to himself. He decides he will not permit Luzhin to marry Dunya under any circumstances. He also dismisses his mother's justifications for the speed of the courtship and for Luzhin's behaviour, believing that Pulcheria has misrepresented the family's happiness and Dunya's willingness to go through with the marriage. Raskolnikov believes, in fact, that Pulcheria has "**sacrificed Dunya's happiness**" in order to secure the family financially and provide for Raskolnikov, her first-born. Raskolnikov thinks that, if Luzhin were present, he might attempt to kill him.

Analysis

Raskolnikov becomes angry for a number of reasons. First, he does not believe it is fair that his mother prioritizes his own fate over Dunya's, although Raskolnikov also does take his mother's money and seems unwilling to make any on his own. Nevertheless, it is an affront to Raskolnikov, on principle, that Dunya would marry a man she does not love in order to better Raskolnikov's future.

Summary

Raskolnikov goes on to denounce Luzhin for his penny-pinching behaviour, since Pulcheria and Dunya will have to pay for much of their travel (Luzhin will cover the cost of luggage which is often free.) Raskolnikov believes that, although Pulcheria has insisted she will not live with the couple after their marriage, Luzhin will be too noble to allow Pulcheria to live separately. Raskolnikov places less

faith in Luzhin's generosity and curses his mother's naiveté in the face of Luzhin's cheapness and self-interest.

Analysis

Luzhin appears to want to make money for his own purposes, but he does not appear poised to share that wealth with Dunya and Pulcheria. Thus, Raskolnikov worries that, even if Dunya marries for money, she might not receive what she desperately desires, making the whole proposition useless as well as unpleasant.

Summary

Raskolnikov turns his thoughts to Dunya, whose character he believes to be pure and noble. Dunya would never marry a man only for money, he avers; she is marrying Luzhin in order to secure Raskolnikov's future. He believes that, if Dunya were to marry for his sake, she would be "no better" than the prostitute Sonya. Raskolnikov becomes more and more upset and declares, finally, that he will not accept Dunya's sacrifice, and he will keep the marriage from going forward.

Analysis

Here Raskolnikov links Sonya's prostitution, intended to help support her family, and Dunya's willingness to marry Luzhin in order to help Raskolnikov and Pulcheria.

One form of prostitution is socially acceptable; one is very clearly not. This represents a larger argument in the novel—that some forms of immorality are accepted by society and others banned. Raskolnikov continues to mull over these distinctions throughout the novel.

Summary

Raskolnikov weighs his options. He could repay Dunya and Pulcheria once he has established himself in a solid professional position, but that could take ten years, and Pulcheria might well be old and sick by then. His other option is to "**accept fate**" and "**renounce any right to act, to live, to love!**"

His plan of yesterday regarding the pawnbroker “**hits him in the head,**” seeming realer and more necessary than ever, and he nearly passes out at the thought of it. To recover, he finds a nearby bench.

Analysis

Raskolnikov needed some additional reason to rob the pawnbroker, certainly he felt that he needed money, but if his robbing her means Dunya will not have to marry Luzhin, then Raskolnikov is not simply helping himself. Raskolnikov provides many justifications for his murder, but this one seems the most justifiable (though, of course, not justifiable enough).

Summary

On his way to the bench Raskolnikov notices a young woman, no older than sixteen, swaying to and fro in casual clothes. She is profoundly drunk at one o'clock in the afternoon. Raskolnikov wishes to help the girl and notices a thirty-year-old man, well-dressed, following the girl “**with certain intentions.**” Raskolnikov insults the man and gets into a fight with him, only to be pulled away by a policeman, to whom he explains the girl's predicament and the man's predatory nature (the man has meanwhile moved away, pretending innocently to smoke a cigarette.)

Analysis

Raskolnikov's concern for the safety of women becomes a recurring motif in the novel. Here the girl has become very drunk: it is not apparent why. But very soon thereafter a man arrives and wishes to take the girl home. Raskolnikov demonstrates a willingness to help women in need, which seems at odds with his ability, later, to kill an old woman and her harmless, terrified sister.

Summary

Raskolnikov gives the police officer twenty kopecks, the last of his money, and tells him to arrange transportation for the girl. The policeman agrees to protect her and follows her as she stumbles and refuses help. The dandy continues on the other side of the street, also following the girl. Suddenly Raskolnikov becomes disgusted and yells to the policeman to leave off, they should all just

have fun, he says, and it's no one else's business. The policeman, confused by Raskolnikov's outburst, continues after the girl. Raskolnikov realizes the policeman kept his money and wonders if Dunya will suffer a fate similar to the girl's.

Analysis

Another recurring scene in the novel: Raskolnikov's ability to change his mind very quickly regarding his moral decisions. Later, when talking to Luzhin and Dunya, he declares with a flourish that he does not care what Dunya does. Of course, Raskolnikov is affected by the actions of those around him, but part of his philosophy, as espoused later in the magazine article on crime, dictates that extraordinary individuals need only set their own moral code and follow it. Raskolnikov claims not to need other people, but his anxieties derive from a concern for others, as Porfiry later explains.

Summary

Raskolnikov remembers that, after reading the letter, he intended to head to the home of his friend Razumikhin, a cheerful and socially-adept student who was Raskolnikov's only companion at the university. Razumikhin also lives in crushing poverty but appears more capable than Raskolnikov of bearing his difficult circumstances; he does so while remaining mostly happy. Razumikhin has also been forced to withdraw temporarily from school, for lack of tuition. He and Raskolnikov have not seen each other recently. Raskolnikov has been avoiding him.

Analysis

Razumikhin is a foil to Raskolnikov. Both are indigent students; both give lessons for money. But Raskolnikov claims not to like society, and he barely drinks. Razumikhin, on the other hand, is a bit of a womanizer, a thrower of parties, and a prodigious drinker. Razumikhin has outbursts of anger, like Raskolnikov, but he is by many accounts one of the novel's more psychologically stable and generous characters.

Chapter 5

Summary

Raskolnikov does not know why exactly he wishes to see his friend, he does not really want any of Razumikhin's teaching lessons, nor does he want advice about Dunya's situation. But he also does not wish to return to his cramped apartment. He decides simply to walk where his feet take him. He walks through a nicer part of town, eats pie and drinks a glass of vodka, and overcome by sleepiness he collapses in the bushes.

Analysis

One of many scenes of Raskolnikov walking for no reason. Parts of Petersburg are described explicitly, but others are referred to only by their first initial. Dostoevsky might have had many reasons for doing this, but one seems to be descriptive: perhaps Raskolnikov himself does not remember or recognize the names of the street he walks on.

Summary

Raskolnikov has a vivid dream, which the narrator attributes to his "**morbid**" condition. In the dream he is about seven and walking with his father on a holiday. He passes a tavern en route to a cemetery to pay respect to his deceased grandmother and younger brother, who died when Raskolnikov himself was quite young. Near the tavern, a group of drunken peasants are standing around a small, old horse fixed to an enormous, heavy cart. One of the peasants shouts that he will take all assembled in the cart, although no one believes it is possible.

Analysis

An extremely important scene; as a child, Raskolnikov could not bear to witness violence, and he does not understand the cruelty of those who beat the horse. It is also noteworthy that this dream is in fact a perfectly recounted memory of Raskolnikov's. We are led to believe the scene actually took place when he was a young boy.

Summary

The peasants get into the cart. The man says he will make the horse gallop, though she is old and probably hasn't galloped for years. The

peasants begin whipping the horse, which can only manage a very slow walk under the cart's strain. The man says he will whip the horse to death, and when whipping is no longer sufficient, he takes a large shaft from the cart and beats her on the back.

One peasant cries that they ought to use an axe, but the man continues with the shaft until the horse is dead. He justifies the killing by saying the horse is his own property.

Analysis

The axe mentioned here seems to reference Raskolnikov's plan: to kill the pawnbroker with an axe (an instrument he later has a hard time stealing). This part of the dream is an illustration of pure cruelty. The horse is not beaten to make it go faster; it is merely beaten to make it suffer and die, for the enjoyment of those drunken peasants who have gathered to watch.

Summary

Young Raskolnikov rushes toward the peasant and tries to fight him; his father has to pull him away. Raskolnikov awakes in the bushes in a fever and sweat. For the first time he wonders aloud whether he really can hit the pawnbroker with an axe, kill her, and take her money.

Although he made a "**trial run**" the previous day, the dream leads Raskolnikov to believe that he would not be able to carry out the murder in reality. He decides to return home but takes a longer route, through the Haymarket.

Analysis

Thus the dream has important consequences for Raskolnikov "**in real life**." He feels that, since he could not bear the suffering of the animal in his memory, he would never be able to take a human life. But this is sadly not the case, and it will take another act of fate (or coincidence) to convince Raskolnikov to carry out the plan.

Summary

It is night time. Raskolnikov enjoys walking through the Haymarket because his rags and poor appearance do not attract

people's attention here, amidst other signs of poverty. Suddenly, as if ordained by a kind of fate (he thinks later), he sees Lizaveta speaking to a man and woman on a corner. The man and woman insist that Lizaveta disregard her sister's orders, whatever they may be (Raskolnikov hears only the middle of the conversation), and come back to the Haymarket the next day between six and seven.

Analysis

An important incident in the novel, and the act of fate that prompts Raskolnikov to commit his crime. If he had not walked through the Haymarket at this moment, Raskolnikov would not have learned of Lizaveta's absence the next day, and he might never have achieved the "courage" necessary to put the plan in motion.

Summary

Raskolnikov recognizes that this means the old woman will be alone for one hour tomorrow. Now the freedom and aversion to murder he experienced after his dream disappear. He feels fate has ordained this set of circumstances; he must carry out his original murderous plan. Even if he had *tried* to learn the old woman's schedule, he would never have known with such exactness when to find her alone. The chance encounter in the Haymarket must, then, have been fated.

Analysis

Chance is important to Dostoevsky, who understood that novels tend to operate on chance occurrences: characters overhear one another, misunderstand one another, and are reunited with one another.

Thus, a feature of novels in general is, to Raskolnikov, a feature of life as it is lived. In this sense the novel truly is "realist": a representation of life as it appears to those who live it.